

श्री प्रियरंजन दास मुंशी: जहां तक उर्दू के सेलेक्टड चैनल की बात है, इसे 15 अगस्त, 2006 को हमने शुरू किया। इसका मतलब यह नहीं कि इसके पीछे कोई राजनीतिक उद्देश्य था, इसको करने का मतलब सिर्फ यह था कि इस देश के 50 मिलियन लोग, हमारे साथी, उर्दू स्पीकिंग हैं या उर्दू लैंग्वेज के साथ ताल्लुक रखते हैं, उन लोगों ने बार-बार खत लिखा कि उर्दू का अलग एक चैनल सिर्फ इस मुल्क के लिए ही नहीं बल्कि पड़ोस में भी इस देश की संस्कृति को पहुंचाने के लिए जरूरी है। इसको मद्देनजर रखते हुए हमने इसे आजादी के दिन से शुरू किया और इसके विस्तार के काम में हम लगे हुए हैं। मैं जया जी को इतना कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे कार्यक्रम दुबई में सेटेलाइट के द्वारा, DD India का जो international circuit है, उसमें इतने पसंद हुए कि उन्होंने लिखा कि इसे 24 ऑवर्स के लिए चालू कीजिए। 24 ऑवर्स की योजना मैं अगले साल से कर रहा हूँ।

श्री अमर सिंह: मगर आजादी के 50 साल तक आपने क्यों नहीं किया, एकाएक क्यों किया? ... (व्यवधान)... चिल्लाइए मत, हम लोग भी चिल्ला सकते हैं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 323.

NOC for allotment of Lignite Blocks

*323. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:††

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for which 'No Objection Certificate' is required from Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) for allotment of Lignite Block when, NLC is also a mining company and restricted to Tamil Nadu State only;

(b) whether Government have any plan to withdraw this NOC system; and

(c) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL
(DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Santosh Bagrodia

Statement

(a) The Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) is the major public sector producer of lignite and lignite based power in the country. In addition to the existing mining and power generation activities in Tamil Nadu, the company is expanding its operations in Rajasthan. The company also has plans for development of blocks in open cast mining, underground coal gasification and coal bed methane in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

NLC also takes up exploration activities in various lignite blocks in the country to augment lignite production. NLC is also designated as a data centre for lignite resource database. Therefore, keeping in view the future plans of NLC and to ensure that the resources are put to use in a planned and scientific manner, it has been provided that a State Government company or undertaking shall obtain a certificate from NLC to the effect that they have no plan or willingness to undertake mining operation in the concerned lignite block.

(b) and (c) No such proposal is under consideration at present.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to quote the reply which the hon. Minister has given. It says, "The company also has plans for development of blocks in open cast mining, underground coal gasification and coal bed methane in Rajasthan and Gujarat. NLC also takes up exploration activities in various lignite blocks in the country to augment lignite production". Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Minister, through you, Sir, that this particular augmentation was supposed to be done twenty years ago. The permission was given to NLC. But they did nothing. They spent about fifty crores of rupees. And because they did not do anything, it was given, later, to a private party. That party also did not do anything. Now, it has again been given to NLC. I have no objection if NLC really does something. But they are not doing anything in the country, except what they are doing in Tamil Nadu. I would like to know on what grounds NOC given to the Rajasthan State Mines and Minerals Corporation for the Raneri lignite block withdrawn. Why was it withdrawn? Has the NLC begun the project to develop the blocks, or, are they just keeping it stopped for years and years?

DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO: NLC does not have the monopoly over lignite reserves in India. But, Sir, it is the nodal agency. Neyveli is

technically exploring lignite reserves in India. So far as the Raneri block is concerned, it is true that this block was allocated to the RSMDC in July 2002 and withdrawn in 2003. Sir, this block was withdrawn in the larger national interest because—I think the hon. Member is aware of it—this block has got a depth of 250 sq. ft. which is not viable for mining. The Government of India has approved underground coal gasification. So, NLC has taken it up as a pilot project. NLC are exploring it now for coal gasification. So, they have invited some tenders. Proper tenders have not yet come. We are still waiting for the project. So, actually, this is for coal gasification. This is not suitable for mining. That is the reason why it has been taken back from the RSMDC.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, my second supplementary is this. The Secretary, Coal, Ministry of Coal has given an assurance to the Government of Rajasthan that this system of NOC will be completely withdrawn. It is still not withdrawn. Why? When will it be withdrawn? If not, then, what is the sanctity of the Secretary himself giving this assurance to the Government of Rajasthan for all the lignite mines in the State of Rajasthan?

DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO: Sir, I feel that the word 'no objection' looks a little harsh; it sounds harsh. It does not mean that we have given the monopoly to the Neyveli Lignite Corporation. Sir, in true spirit, the Neyveli Lignite Corporation is the nodal agency for lignite exploration. I have already explained it. Because of this NOC, the main fact is, the NOC requirement is there in respect of allocation of coal blocks also. As Neyveli Lignite Corporation is exploring the lignite reserves in India, wherever projects are there, they are planning for it. So, if any other State PSU or a State Government or any private sector ... (*Interruptions*)... if they want to have a lignite block, the Government is referring it to the Neyveli Lignite Corporation asking them whether there is any future programme for the Neyveli Lignite Corporation. If the Neyveli Lignite Corporation is planning for any further project, then, we are requesting the Government, I mean, the other Government PSUs to go in for some other block. Sir, it is not a constitutional one. It is not a legal legacy. Actually, it is for the convenience. So, as the hon. Member felt it, we have discussed it. I would like to tell the House that because of this No Objection Certificate, no PSU has suffered till date. We have given 10 blocks in Rajasthan; and in Gujarat, we have given 11 blocks. This NOC has not come in the way of allocating blocks.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल: सभापति जी, आप स्वयं इस बात को जानते हैं कि राजस्थान में, खास तौर से रेगिस्तान इलाकों में लिग्नाइट डिपोजिट्स बहुत बड़ी मात्रा में हैं, लेकिन वहां पर इस सैक्टर का डेवलपमेंट नहीं हो पाया है। यह बात हम सभी को मालूम है और आपको भी मालूम है। मैं मंत्री जी से यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि आपने नेयवेली लिग्नाइट कॉर्पोरेशन (एनएलसी) के लिए नो ऑब्जेक्शन की बात कही है और आप यह इस आधार पर कह रहे हैं कि वे किस जगह के लिए प्लानिंग कर रहे हैं, उसमें कोई डिस्टेंस न हो, इसीलिए उनको एनओसी लेने की जरूरत है।

सभापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूं कि इसे आप दूसरी तरह से भी कर सकते हैं। पहले एनएलसी को अपने कौन से एरियाज प्रोस्पेक्ट करने हैं या किनका एक्सप्लोरेशन करना है, वह अपना ईयर मार्क कर लें और बाकी के लिए छोड़ दें फिर उसके बाद जिनको करना है, वे कर लें। किन्तु एनओसी का एक और स्टैप लाने का कोई मतलब नहीं है। इससे तो डेवलपमेंट हैम्पर होगा और उनके दरवाजे पर भागना पड़ेगा, फिर वे एनओसी इतनी जल्दी तो देते भी नहीं हैं। क्या आप यह बता सकते हैं कि आज तक एनओसी कितने लोगों को दी गई है और कितने लोगों ने इसके लिए एप्लाइ किया है? अब तक अगर एनओसी दी गई है, तो किन-किन लोगों को दी है?

DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO: Sir, I have already explained that this No Objection Certificate is not a hurdle for any State Government to have their own projects. Sir, as far as Rajasthan is concerned, there are reserves of four billion tonnes of lignite. ... (Interruptions) ... Sir, in Rajasthan, already the Neyveli Lignite Corporation has proposed a project of 250 megawatts at Bithnok, a 500 megawatts project at Reri, and the Government of Rajasthan has got a 70 megawatts project of its own. Sir, as I have already explained to you, 10 blocks have been given to Rajasthan. Again, we have identified 15 blocks in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. Rajasthan has applied recently. When I had been to the launching function of this project, the Chief Minister of Rajasthan put a request that she needed some four more blocks. We are considering it; and we are willing to give it.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: NTPC has exclusively been given mandate to produce thermal power. NHPC has been given mandate to produce hydropower. Now overlapping is being allowed. NTPC is producing hydropower and NHPC is also producing thermal power. Like that, Neyveli Lignite Corporation has been given the exclusive mandate for exploring the mineral and ancillary generation of power. We learnt from newspapers that they are importing lignite and setting up a plant in coastal area of Tamil Nadu. My specific question is: Why should there be overlapping of activity of this specific corporation? PSUs have been given mandate

exclusively because NTPC expertise has to generate power. So, you can confine to using your expertise to explore the mineral and you can give it to NTPC for power generation instead of Neyveli Lignite Corporation itself importing lignite and generating power.

DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO: Sir, till date, Neyveli Lignite Corporation are exploring their own lignite and they are producing power. Our hon. Member says that they are importing lignite. They are not importing lignite. This is absolutely not the correct information. I request the hon. Member to verify it. I will also verify it. But lignite is not being imported from any place.

श्री सभापति: आप वेरिफाई करेंगे क्योंकि अभी तक आपको खुद विश्वास नहीं है।

DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO: No, Sir, I am sure we are not importing lignite. There is no proposal of importing lignite to Neyveli. And another thing is, transportation is difficult. It cannot be carried for long distances.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. Q. No. 324.

Allowing of small shops in residential areas

*324. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given wide publicity in leading newspapers of NCT of Delhi through advertisements on the 12th of October, 2006 allowing small shops in residential areas in 22 categories of trades in compliance with the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court;

(b) if so, the complete details of the scheme formulated by Government;

(c) whether Government have allowed only one shop on one plot, irrespective of plot area; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken to allow more traders on bigger plots?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had issued advertisements in newspapers in order to implement the directions